AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following is a listing of claims that replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. Underlining denotes added text, and strikethrough denotes cancelled text.

1. (Currently amended) A method for increasing plasma viscosity in a mammal, comprising administering to said mammal ~~an approved~~ a pharmaceutically acceptable non-oxygen-carrying viscosity increasing agent in an amount sufficient to increase peripheral viscosity by at least ~~1.0 cp~~ 2.0 centipoise.

Claim 2 (Currently cancelled).

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said mammal is a human.

4. (Currently amended) ~~The method of claim 1~~ A method for increasing plasma viscosity in a mammal, comprising administering to said mammal a pharmaceutically acceptable non-oxygen-carrying viscosity increasing agent in an amount sufficient to increase peripheral viscosity by at least 1.0 centipoise, wherein administration of said viscosity-increasing agent delays or eliminates the need for a blood transfusion.

5. (Currently amended) ~~The method of claim 1~~ A method for increasing plasma viscosity in a mammal, comprising administering to said mammal a pharmaceutically acceptable non-oxygen-carrying viscosity increasing agent in an amount sufficient to increase peripheral viscosity by at least 1.0 centipoise, wherein, either prior to or following administration of said viscosity-increasing agent, the hematocrit of said mammal is reduced by at least 50% from normal for the mammalian species.

6. (Currently amended) ~~The method of claim 1~~ A method for increasing plasma viscosity in a mammal, comprising administering to said mammal a pharmaceutically acceptable non-oxygen-carrying viscosity increasing agent in an amount sufficient to increase

peripheral viscosity by at least 1.0 centipoise, wherein, either prior to or following administration of said viscosity-increasing agent, the hematocrit of said mammal is reduced by at least 50% from normal for the individual mammal.

7. (Currently amended) A method for maintaining capillary blood flow in a mammal, comprising increasing plasma viscosity by administering to said mammal ~~an approved~~ a pharmaceutically acceptable non-oxygen-carrying viscosity-increasing agent in an amount sufficient to increase plasma viscosity by at least 1.0 ~~cp~~ centipoise.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein said mammal is a human.

9. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein said increase in plasma viscosity results in an increase in peripheral blood flow of at least 25%.

10. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein, either prior to or following the administration of said viscosity-increasing agent, the hematocrit of said mammal is decreased by at least 50%.

11. (Original) A method for shifting the transfusion threshold in a patient, comprising administering to a patient suffering from a reduction in red blood cell concentration a pharmaceutically acceptable viscosity increasing agent in an amount sufficient to increase or maintain functional capillary density at least 60% of normal or to increase plasma viscosity at least 25% or both.

12. (Original) A method for treating a patient suffering or at risk of a condition characterized by a reduction in peripheral blood flow, comprising administering to said patient a pharmaceutically acceptable viscosity increasing agent.

13. (Original) A method for enhancing or maintaining the release of vasodilators and shear stress dependent vasodilators in the system of microscopic blood vessels of a

mammal, comprising administering to said mammal a pharmaceutically acceptable non-oxygen-carrying viscosity increasing agent.

Claims 14-20 (previously cancelled).

21. (Original) A method for enhancing the biological function of a hemoglobin-based artificial blood product or plasma expander that provides insufficient viscosity to maintain sufficient wall shear stress, comprising administering to a patient a non-oxygen-carrying viscosity increasing agent in conjunction with said hemoglobin-based artificial blood product or plasma expander in an amount sufficient to elevate plasma viscosity sufficiently to maintain functional capillary density in a mammalian patient at least 40% of normal.

Claims 22-25 (previously cancelled).

26. (Previously added) The method of Claim 1, wherein said viscosity increasing agent has a viscosity of at least 4.0 centipoise.

27. (Previously added) The method of Claim 26, wherein said viscosity increasing agent has a viscosity of between 4 and 20 centipoise.

28. (Currently amended) ~~The method of Claim 27,~~ A method for increasing plasma viscosity in a mammal, comprising administering to said mammal a pharmaceutically acceptable non-oxygen-carrying viscosity increasing agent in an amount sufficient to increase peripheral viscosity by at least 1.0 centipoise, wherein said viscosity increasing agent has a viscosity of between 4 and 20 centipoise, and wherein said viscosity increasing agent comprises a PEG-dextran conjugate.

29. (Currently amended) ~~The method of Claim 28,~~ A method for increasing plasma viscosity in a mammal, comprising administering to said mammal a pharmaceutically acceptable non-oxygen-carrying viscosity increasing agent in an amount sufficient to increase

peripheral viscosity by at least 1.0 centipoise, wherein said viscosity increasing agent has a viscosity of between 4 and 20 centipoise, and wherein the PEG of said PEG-dextran conjugate has an average molecular weight of between 1,000 and 40,000 daltons.

30. (Previously added) The method of Claim 7, wherein said viscosity-increasing agent has a viscosity of at least 4.0 centipoise.

31. (Previously added) The method of Claim 30, wherein said viscosity-increasing agent has a viscosity of between 4 and 20 centipoise.

32. (Previously added) The method of Claim 31, wherein said viscosity-increasing agent comprises a PEG-dextran conjugate.

33. (Previously added) The method of Claim 32, wherein the PEG of said PEG-dextran conjugate has an average molecular weight of between 1,000 and 40,000 daltons.

34. (Previously added) The method of Claim 11, wherein said viscosity increasing agent has a viscosity of at least 4.0 centipoise.

35. (Previously added) The method of Claim 34, wherein said viscosity increasing agent has a viscosity of between 4 and 20 centipoise.

36. (Previously added) The method of Claim 35, wherein said viscosity increasing agent comprises a PEG-dextran conjugate.

37. (Previously added) The method of Claim 36, wherein the PEG of said PEG-dextran conjugate has an average molecular weight of between 1,000 and 40,000 daltons.

38. (Previously added) The method of Claim 12, wherein said viscosity increasing agent has a viscosity of at least 4.0 centipoise.

39. (Previously added) The method of Claim 38, wherein said viscosity increasing agent has a viscosity of between 4 and 20 centipoise.

40. (Previously added) The method of Claim 39, wherein said viscosity increasing agent comprises a PEG-dextran conjugate.

41. (Previously added) The method of Claim 40, wherein the PEG of said PEG-dextran conjugate has an average molecular weight of between 1,000 and 40,000 daltons.

42. (Previously added) The method of Claim 13, wherein said viscosity increasing agent has a viscosity of at least 4.0 centipoise.

43. (Previously added) The method of Claim 42, wherein said viscosity increasing agent has a viscosity of between 4 and 20 centipoise.

44. (Previously added) The method of Claim 43, wherein said viscosity increasing agent comprises a PEG-dextran conjugate.

45. (Previously added) The method of Claim 44, wherein the PEG of said PEG-dextran conjugate has an average molecular weight of between 1,000 and 40,000 daltons.

46. (Previously added) The method of Claim 21, wherein said viscosity increasing agent has a viscosity of at least 4.0 centipoise.

47. (Previously added) The method of Claim 46, wherein said viscosity increasing agent has a viscosity of between 4 and 20 centipoise.

48. (Previously added) The method of Claim 47, wherein said viscosity increasing agent comprises a PEG-dextran conjugate.

49. (Previously added) The method of Claim 48, wherein the PEG of said PEG-dextran conjugate has an average molecular weight of between 1,000 and 40,000 daltons.

50. (New) The method of Claim 1, wherein said administering comprises administering said agent in an amount sufficient to increase peripheral viscosity by at least 2.5 centipoise.

51. (New) The method of Claim 1, wherein said administering comprises administering said agent in an amount sufficient to increase peripheral viscosity by at least 3 centipoise.

52. (New) The method of Claim 1, wherein said administering comprises administering said agent in an amount sufficient to increase peripheral viscosity by from 3 to 5 centipoise.

53. (New) The method of Claim 1, wherein said administering comprises administering said agent in an amount sufficient to increase peripheral viscosity by from 3.5 to 4.5 centipoise.